

Native Prairie

UPDATE

VOLUME 10 - WINTER 2001

Welcome to our winter issue of the Native Prairie Update and welcome to all of our new stewards! At this time we are pleased to announce that 502 landowners have committed to conserving 191, 044 acres through the Native Prairie Stewardship Program.

This issue begins with a profile of Jason and Joan Jackson of Cabri. The Jacksons, who are the latest recipients of The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA), are also participants in the Corporation's Streambank Stewardship Program. In this article, they have described the challenges of developing management plans for their native prairie and riparian areas.

Our profile of Native Prairie Stewards features Philip and Sheila Wandler of Denzil, Sask. As some of you may remember, the Wandler's site was used as a demonstration project for a workshop held this past summer.

In addition to rural projects, we also have reports on the progress of community restoration projects. A special feature on Marion McVeety Elementary School, and two Regina secondary schools, Winston Knoll Collegiate and Luther College High School discusses the restoration of "garden-size plots" of rare native prairie in urban schoolyards.

We are also finishing a telephone survey to assess the Native Prairie Stewardship program. Thanks to all who have participated.

Please check our list of coming events. As partners in the Prairie Conservation Action Plan, we will be making a series of community and school visits. If we happen to be in your area - please accept this invitation to come out and join us!

Lesley Hall, Coordinator
Native Prairie Stewardship Program

Ranchers Win Stewardship Award

For a young couple trying to build a life in ranching, Jason and Joan Jackson of Cabri have reached an important milestone by winning The 2000 Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) for Saskatchewan.

The award, sponsored by the Saskatchewan Stock Grower's Association, The Royal Bank, and Ducks Unlimited Canada, recognizes producers who demonstrate sustainable land use practices.

And that's something the Jacksons have clearly accomplished.

Since they established the Three J Angus Ranch in 1988, not only have the Jacksons increased their herd from 21 to 140 animals - they have done so by improving the condition of their native prairie pastureland as well as the health of a spring-fed creek flowing through their property.

"We're grass ranchers now. . . The more animals we can graze on the same piece of land - the more money for us in the end. And yet we're still taking care of the environment and looking after it and growing grass," said Joan.

While the Jacksons, along with their eight-year-old daughter Jimmi-Lee and five-year-old son Jaymeson, have forged a promising future for themselves, they admit developing a successful management plan has been a challenging learning experience.

"When we first got here, it was all fenced in one complete piece. There was no cross fencing and the water facilities were located at the homestead site," said Joan, noting they started out with six cultivated land and eventually, another section of cultivated land which they rented from Jason's parents.

Some of the livestock distribution problems they initially had included damage to riparian (streambank) areas, selective grazing and weed invasion due to overgrazing. The rough terrain also kept the cattle from utilizing the outer corners of the pasture on the uplands.



Promoting Stewardship

As participants in the Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation's Streambank Stewardship Program, Jason and Joan Jackson of Cabri have played a valuable role in promoting riparian management. Along with being featured in two management guides, they have participated in media interviews; hosted numerous workshops and tours; and more recently, shared their story through the management video "Riparian Areas: Caring for a Prairie Treasure," produced in conjunction with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's National Soil and Water Conservation Program. In February, the Jacksons will also be speaking at the 6th Prairie Conservation & Endangered Species Conference in Winnipeg. As The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) winners in Saskatchewan, the Jacksons have also been asked to make presentations on behalf of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association.

quarters of native range, two quarters of

"In the heat of the summer the animals would spend a lot of time down in the creek area, do a lot of trampling damage and muck up the water. This creek does go through a lot of other farms after it leaves our place so one of the concerns was water quality," said Joan, noting the headwaters of Miry Creek originate on the ranch. The water then flows northeast to the South Saskatchewan River, 12 miles away.

In 1994, the Jacksons came a step closer to finding a solution when they were approached by Bill Bristol of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration. He asked if they would like to set up a riparian management demonstration project with funding from the Canada/Saskatchewan Green Plan Agreement.

To begin their project, the Jacksons received technical assistance from Tom Harrison of Sweet Grass Range Consulting. Tom, who now coordinates the Conservation Corporation's Streambank Stewardship Program, assessed the ranch and worked with the couple in drawing up a fencing and grazing plan.

Making changes

To develop a rotational grazing system, the Jacksons built three-and-a-half miles of cross fencing in 1995. A new watering site central to all the pastures was also developed by trenching a 2500 foot pipeline from the old site at the yard.

"We now have 10 pastures in total that we rotate throughout the year. This allows the plant species to complete their yearly growth patterns right to seed set," said Joan, adding a new alleyway up the coulee provides access to a crested wheat grass field for early spring grazing. In the past, a lack of water and fencing limited its use.

To improve forage production in the lowland area, two riparian fields were also created. The "east wetland basin," which comprises 40 acres, is only used for weaned calves in the fall. The "west wetland basin," which totals 220 acres - is only used as a winter feeding area for the cows. At this time of year, the cows do less damage and browsing in the woody draw.

Joan said, "Basically, we have improved our production off of the same unit of land. And, we're seeing more wildlife habitat. We have lots of pheasants, deer and birds of all kinds." In the past, woody vegetation in the riparian areas was limited to old growth and open areas around the base of trees. Referring to a lone cottonwood tree accompanied by an assortment of shrubs and trees including maples, chokecherry, snowberry, rose and willows, Joan explained, "Now we're seeing new growth and mid-growth as well as old growth which is providing cover for wildlife species."

"We now do see that ducks are actually raising little ones - hatching them out right down on the creek. In the past they didn't nest here because there was too much disturbance from the cows," said Joan, adding "We also have thousands of ducks that winter over right here because the water from our spring-fed creek stays open all winter."

Noting the improvements to the creek itself, the Jacksons also report that an increase in more vigorous, deeply rooted plant species has improved streambank stability.

"The Creek is getting narrower and deeper because the stream edges are getting more grown in with grasses," said Joan. "This cuts back the speed and velocity of water which reduces erosion. Now the water is a lot clearer."

Benefits to livestock health have also become evident through the use of the new watering site. Aside from clean water, the cows come down to the trough area to use back rubbers for insecticide application.

"When they all have to come to a central watering point it allows us to check for any



A Gathering Place

While the Three J Angus Ranch has hosted many visitors through workshops, its history as a community gathering place goes much further. During the drought of the 1930s, it was one of the few places that had flowing water. And up until the 1950s, it was used by young people for get togethers and ball games. Prior to that, it was a stop over on the Red Deer North Forks Edmonton Trail. The Trail, which began at Fort Garry at Winnipeg, extended through Moose Jaw, Swift Current and Empress. From there, settlers would cross the South Saskatchewan River and travel south to Fort Benton or northwest to Edmonton. Evidence of the area's historical attraction can be found in the artifacts from old homestead sites and teepee rings scattered throughout the hills. But the Jacksons note the ranch has long been home to wildlife as well. Among their finds, they have retrieved a dozen buffalo skulls from the creek area.

health problems that need to be looked after," said Joan, adding "It also makes moving cows from one pasture to another quite easy. All it takes is opening one gate and closing the other. They know when we come and call "new grass" they're going to a better supply of grub."

To monitor the success of their project, the Jacksons have tried to learn more about their existing resources.

"Jason is very much a reader," said Joan, noting that he "has brought home every kind of book on plants and range management. We've really studied to know what [grass species] we have out here and what we can do to help each of them."

Since they developed a deferred grazing system, the Jacksons have been able to provide additional rest for their native prairie by seeding tame forages. As well, much of their cultivated land has been converted for uses such as greenfeed and fall grazing.

Reflecting on the overwhelming rejuvenation of the special areas of their ranch, Jason concluded, "We think its every landowner's initiative to take care of areas like this. It's good for everybody."



Denzil Producers Protect Prairie from Overgrazing

by Myrna MacDonald



Sharing Ideas

Philip Wandler, a Native Prairie Steward from Denzil, discusses his project with Jennifer Lohmeyer of the Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation.

In the spring of 1999, Philip and Sheila Wandler of Denzil, Sask., seeded 160 acres of cultivated land to tame forage, giving them about 480 acres of pasture land that's scattered in three different directions from their farm yard.

That total includes about 120 acres of native prairie which was the main reason why the Wandlers decided to add more pasture and rotations to their annual grazing program.

"For the last couple of years, we've had to leave the cows on the native pastures a lot longer than we liked," said Sheila, describing the prairie's soil as sandy and light with some hills and steep coulees.

But once their new tame pasture is established, the Wandlers can move their mixed herd of Black Angus and Blonde Aquitaine cattle more frequently during the grazing season.

"We'll only use one of the 60-acre native pastures in the early spring, then we'll use the north one from about mid-June to mid-summer," Sheila added that if conditions are

good, they may eventually be able to bale some of their tame forage. That would give the native grass even more growing time in the spring.

The native prairie, along with most of the Wandlers' pasture and their three quarters of crop land, have been owned by Philip's family since 1930. Besides providing good grazing land, the native pastures have been a reliable source of spring crocuses, saskatoon berries, wild mushrooms and other pleasures.

"Our two daughters were part of a trail riding club when they were younger. At least once a year, we planned a horseback ride through the north pasture. Its coulees make it an ideal place for riding," said Sheila, adding that they still use their three horses for checking on cattle and for moving them from pasture to pasture.

Two years ago, the Wandlers' concern for their native prairie motivated them to join the Native Prairie Stewardship program, offered by the Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation (SWCC).

While two of the Wandlers' neighbors are voluntary stewards of their own native prairie pastures, most of the land in the Denzil area has been cultivated for crops or seeded to tame forage.

Despite a few dry years and some intensive grazing, the Wandlers' native prairie is in fairly good shape, said ecologist Kerry Hecker of Regina. She was one of the Conservation Corporation employees who conducted an inventory of flowers, grasses and shrubs on the Wandlers' native pastures during the summer of 1998.

"They've got an amazing number of flower species, including some kinds that we haven't seen in other areas," noted Hecker, who uses the species inventories to rate the biodiversity of landowners' prairie parcels and to gauge whether prairie enhancement projects actually improve the land's condition.

Although Sheila has noticed the pastures' variety of flowers and plants in the past, the inventory's findings still surprised her. "They found 34 different species of flowers and about 12 different types of grasses. And they said if they came back in a month, there would be even more since different ones grow at different times of the year."

Since the native prairie is an integral part of their grazing rotation, keeping it in good condition is a priority for the Wandlers. And, after years of anxiously watching the grass grow, Sheila is convinced the native prairie produces better than their tame pasture.

"The cows always seem to gain so well on the prairie grass. You sometimes think the seeded forage is better, but the longer you're around, the more you realize that the native pasture just outperforms the rest. The plants are there whether it's wet or dry - they may not produce as well in a dry year, but they will be back the next next year, through thick and thin."



Regina School Project A Learning Experience For All

By Stan Bartlett

Restoring native prairie habitat at three Regina schools has been a positive learning experience for students, teachers, advisors, and the sponsor of the pilot projects, the Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation.

The Community Habitats Project began in 1999 at Marion McVeety Elementary School, and at two Regina secondary schools, Winston Knoll Collegiate and Luther College High School. Each project involves restoring a "garden-size plot" of rare native prairie in a most unlikely location – an urban schoolyard.

"The idea was to get to the large urban audience, especially children, who often don't have any contact with native prairie," said Lesley Hall, manager of the Corporation's Native Prairie Stewardship Program.

"It's an important part of being a prairie person to know about our native prairie plants."

Other schoolyard and volunteer restoration projects have cited problems with lack of community support, inappropriate, unattractive and high-maintenance designs, and inadequate attention to maintenance over the summer holidays, said Hall. One of the project goals was to address these types of concerns so as to ensure the success of future projects.

In 1999, the Conservation Corporation, with support from Environment Canada's EcoAction 2000 and Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management's Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, contacted potential schools and individual agrologists and biologists from Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and Ducks Unlimited who could potentially act as advisors for projects. As well, a step-by-step manual called "A Guide to Prairie Restoration: How to grow your



Prairie Assignment

Laura Wiley, a student at Regina's Winston Knoll Collegiate, works on the signs that will be used to identify the school's native prairie restoration project.

own patch of native prairie" was developed for participants. Last June workshops were held to introduce everyone to the pilot project. When funding is available, Hall hopes to take the program across southern Saskatchewan. Projects designed to resemble natural prairie, rather than display gardens emphasizing flowers, are lower maintenance and offer the best chance of success, she said.

Marion McVeety Elementary School

At Marion McVeety, a designated Green School under the Society, Environment and Educational Development Foundation (SEEDS), principal Peter Looyen was invited to attend the workshop and embraced the project.

"We thought it was a good idea so students can actually see what real native prairie looks like," said Looyen. "It's a historical thing and a sidelight to the environment. It's looking after things in their natural state."

Preparation of the site began in the spring of 2000, with Looyen and two Grade 5 classes planting seeds from 28 different species.

This spring, Conservation Corporation staff and the project advisor will meet with teachers and parents to discuss maintenance, especially weed control, and help set up a schedule for the summer. McVeety already had parents and the Parent-Teacher Association helping with a vegetable and flower gardens, and even a "pizza garden" containing peppers and tomatoes. The school also has a program in place that sees families with a child in the school sign up for caretaking the school grounds over the summer.

"The misconception is that it's easy – that you can throw in the seeds, that it's native and you can let it go," said Hall. "But there's great potential for learning so it's worth some of the work."

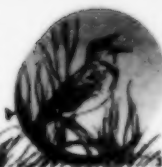
In the case of McVeety, the support of the school and community will contribute to the success of the project, she said.

Winston Knoll Collegiate

At Winston Knoll Collegiate, Tom Ash, the Grade 9 science teacher and environmental club advisor, will incorporate the restoration of a patch of native prairie into the curriculum. Art and social science teachers are also interested in using the restored prairie as a jumping-off point for lessons. Finally, the school also has an active environmental club that took it on as a major project.

"It was fun and we learned about the different plant species, about native prairie and its benefits," said Kim Anderson, a Grade 12 student and environment club member.

Continued next page...



Learning and Growing

At Winston Knoll Collegiate, the restoration of a patch of native prairie has been taken on by the school's environmental club. Tom Ash, who is the club advisor and a Grade 9 science teacher, plans to incorporate the project into the curriculum. Interest has also been shown by art and social science teachers. Shown from left to right are students Jessica Riess, Kerry Hecker (SWCC), Jennifer Burton, Stephanie MacFarlane and Tom Ash.

Last June the 16-square-metre site at Winston Knoll was covered with black plastic in order to kill all plants and seeds. In September, Ash and the environmental club members turned the sod and dug a narrow path and border. In October, 29 different species of native seed were planted in half of the plot.

The other half of the plot was covered with a small amount of native prairie sod donated to the Conservation Corporation during the construction of a new golf course south of Lumsden last summer.

"Not only have they used native seed, they've transplanted some original native sod," said Hall. "They'll be able to compare and contrast - to find out what's growing in both places and to see the differences."

Luther College High School

The third project at Luther College involves a 50-square-metre patch of native prairie that will become part of the Grade 9 science curriculum. There are also plans to incorporate interaction with First Nations groups into the project to learn about the historical, spiritual and social significance of native prairie.

Seed was purchased in 1999 and planted by students and grown in the school greenhouse. The plot has been sprayed with an herbicide and roto-tilled, however, the treatment was inadequate and black plastic was put down in early August 2000. As some grass was still growing by late September 2000,

planting and seeding were delayed until spring.

"Unfortunately, our plot wasn't ready when the greenhouse plants were ready so we lost a number," said science teacher Dave Hall who incorporated the project in Grade 9 and Grade 11 biology classes. "In a sense, we'll be starting over in the spring."

The pilot project gives students a better understanding of the Saskatchewan environment and the threatened native prairie that existed long before Europeans arrived, said Hall. "I'm trying to get them attached to native prairie emotionally so it becomes an important part of their lives rather than some weeds out in the field," he said.

This summer Conservation Corporation staff plan to help organize special planting or maintenance days for participants and an open house for the media to officially kick-off each of the projects. Each project has had its challenges, but there are several major benefits, said Hall.

Promoting natural greenspace projects in cities and towns will have a direct benefit to biodiversity by increasing indigenous cover. More importantly, it will bring large numbers of people into contact with natural spaces and into the role of prairie stewards, she said.

"For schools, integrating this outdoor classroom into science and biology, as well as social studies, history and art classes, can teach valuable lessons about our prairie history and our current place in the landscape along with core curriculum lessons.

The long-term benefits of these lessons should not be underestimated in terms of public attitudes toward the environment, said Hall.

Needle and Thread Grass

(Stipa comata)

Needle and Thread Grass is a long-lived perennial adapted for the cool season. It starts its growth in late April and flowers in June with its seeds maturing from July to mid-August. It is generally found in dry grasslands on sandy or poor soils. Needle and Thread Grass is so named for its seeds which have extremely long, curled beards. They are thought to resemble a threaded sewing needle. This grass is the official candidate species for Saskatchewan's new provincial grass.



Dark-eyed Junco

by Dr. Glen McMaster

The Dark-eyed Juncos are variable in color, with individuals falling into one of 5 different color variants, or "races", that were once considered 4 separate species. In Saskatchewan, we are lucky to have two of these color variants.

The Pink-sided Oregon race has pink sides, gray hood and a brown back, and is found in the Cypress Hills. The Slate-colored race is found throughout the rest of the province. Perhaps the most formally attired of the sparrows, the Slate-colored race only lacks a white bow tie to complete its tuxedo of black hood, back and wings, white belly, and corsage of a pink bill. The white outer tail feathers of the junco are usually seen in flight. While juncos are small birds weighing only about 15 grams, in 1840 John James Audubon described junco meat as "...extremely delicate and juicy".

The junco is commonly seen foraging with groups of other sparrows in spring and fall as it migrates through southern Saskatchewan. Mainly a seed-eater, the junco uses an

Junco is Latin for "rush" or "reed", which is somewhat of an odd choice for a bird that does not often venture into marshy habitat.

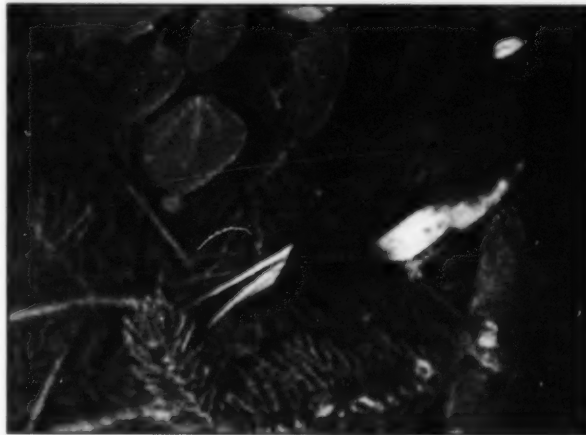


Photo credit: Edgar T. Jones, courtesy of the Provincial Museum of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta

effective hopping "double-scratch" technique to clear leaves and debris from the ground with its feet, revealing the seeds below. The name

Instead, juncos generally breed in coniferous or mixed-wood habitat, with the male proclaiming his territory by trilling from atop a small spruce tree, and the female tending to the nest on the ground nearby.

Junco nestling legs develop quite rapidly, so that at the approach of a potential predator, the young often are able to run from the nest rather than fly.

Juncos overwinter mainly in the south-central and eastern United States. In the late 1950s two juncos, banded in Yorkton during fall migration by Dr. Stuart Houston of Saskatoon, were recovered. The first junco was found in Doddridge, Arkansas where it was overwintering, while the second was found in July in Soldotna, Alaska where it had likely been nesting. Unfortunately, the Alaskan junco had been killed by a cat.

Burrowing Owl Enhancement Program

Nature Saskatchewan is offering assistance of up to \$20/acre for seeding crop land back to pasture and to enhance habitat for Burrowing Owls and other grassland species.

Eligibility Requirements:

1. Landowners must have had Burrowing Owls nesting on their property or on a nearby pasture other than their own within the last 10-15 years.
2. Smooth brome and crested wheatgrass must be excluded from the sowing mix and the percentage of alfalfa cannot exceed 5 per cent of the mix by weight.
3. Priority given to sites that border existing pasture.

4. Acreage to be sown must be at least 40 acres.

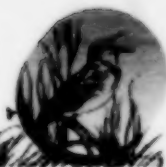
5. A 10-year agreement is required.

Level of assistance provided is subject to available funds. Maximum level of assistance is \$5,000 per applicant. To apply call Nature Saskatchewan at 1-800-667-4668.

Support for the Habitat Enhancement Program is provided by:

- Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management - Fish and Wildlife Development Fund
- Environment Canada

Dr. Glen McMaster is an avian ecologist with the Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation. While he is currently conducting surveys to monitor populations of grassland songbirds in Saskatchewan, Dr. McMaster has also produced a series of columns about "backyard birds." These columns, which include the one published in this newsletter, are intended to raise the awareness of birds commonly found in Saskatchewan.



Coming Events



Ecological Extravaganza - Cows, Fish, Cattle Dogs and Kids

January 18, 2001

BEEF SEMINAR-YORKTON, SK.

The theme of this seminar is "Growing the Saskatchewan Cow Herd" and will feature a keynote presentation by Harlan Hughes of the North Dakota State University. To register, contact Naomi Paley at the Yorkton Rural Service Centre at (306) 786 - 1502. For additional information, contact Wally Vanin, Grazing and Pasture Technology Program at (306) 563 - 1203.

January 22 - 26, 2001 and

February 6 - 9, 2001

ECOLOGICAL EXTRAVAGANZA

Hosted by partners in the Prairie Conservation Action Plan, a series of community visits will feature activities and presentations for both children and adults alike. During the day, visits to schools will include activities such as the "Cows, Fish, Cattle Dogs and Kids" game show. In the evening, the public is invited to attend presentations on conservation and agriculture issues. The latter will provide information about programs offered by various agencies and organizations, including some that provide technical and/or financial assistance to landowners.

Organizations represented include: the Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation; Grazing and Pasture Technology Program, Saskatchewan Stock

Growers Association; Sask. Ag and Food; Ducks Unlimited; Nature Conservancy of Canada; Sask. Burrowing Owl Interpretive Centre; Grasslands National Park; and Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management.

Schools that will be visited in January include

- Jan. 22, Rockglen
- Jan. 23, Assiniboia Elementary
- Jan. 24, Bengough
- Jan. 25, Coronach School
- Jan. 26, Assiniboia 7th Avenue

In February, some school visits will be combined.

- Feb. 5, Radville St. Olivier School.
- Feb. 6, students from Spring Valley (Artesian School) and Viceroy will join students at Crane Valley.
- Feb. 7, students from Pangman will go to Ogema School
- Feb. 8, students from Oungre will go to Gladmar
- Feb. 9, Willowbunch

The public is invited to attend evening meetings beginning at 7:00 p.m. on:

- Jan. 23, Assiniboia Elementary School
- Jan. 25, Coronach School or the town hall if space is limited
- Feb. 5, Radville St. Olivier School
- Feb. 6, Crane Valley School

For more information contact Karyn Sealise, PCAP coordinator at (306) 352 - 0472 or Tom Harrison, SWCC at (306) 731-4404

Download these Management Guides FREE!

Whether you're a birder, teacher, farmer, conservationist, rancher, or city dweller; we have a wealth of information that will help you understand how together we can:

1. protect wildlife
2. enhance wetlands / riparian areas
3. conserve native prairie
4. develop an ecotourism site

Management guides are now available electronically through the Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation's website at: www.wetland.sk.ca

Managing Your Native Prairie Parcels - includes 48 pages, 49 photos/illustrations; explanation of prairie ecosystem, step-by-step management plan, landowner profiles, resource list.

Streambank Stewardship - includes 43 pages, 86 photos/illustrations; explains effects of agricultural activities on riparian areas; step-by-step management plan, landowner profiles, resource list.

Managing Saskatchewan Wetlands - includes 68 pages, 87 photos/illustrations, step-by-step management plan, landowner profiles, resource list.

Development of a Saskatchewan Bird Trail - includes a "Framework Strategy" and a "Community Planning Guide." Presents market trends, community benefits, developing partnerships, action plans, working with volunteers, fund-raising, trail planning, resource list.

January 30 - 31, 2001

**HERDING PROFITS -
SWIFT CURRENT, SK.**

This cow/calf economics seminar will include presentations by researchers and livestock producers. Producer panels will also be featured each day. The S.W. Forage Association's annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the event. For more information contact Jim Graham, Sask. Ag and Food at (306) 778 - 8284.

February 1, 2001

**MAXIMIZING PROFITS WITH
GRAZING - YORKTON, SK.**

Producers attending this grazing seminar will learn how to maximize profits by extending their grazing season; providing clean water to their livestock; improving their summer grazing management and calving in harmony with nature.

To register, contact Naomi Paley at the Yorkton Rural Service Centre at (306) 786 - 1502. For additional information, contact Wally Vanin, Grazing and Pasture Technology Program at (306) 563 - 1203.

February 1 - 3, 2001

**SASKATCHEWAN WILDLIFE
FEDERATION 72nd ANNUAL
CONVENTION -
PRINCE ALBERT, SK.**

The theme of this year's convention is "What's In It for Wildlife?" Dr. Valerius Geist, who has background in the game farm industry, will be the keynote speaker. For more information contact the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation at (306) 692 - 8812.

February 2 - 3, 2001

**NATIVE PLANTS AS HABITAT FOR
WILDLIFE - MOOSE JAW, SK.**

**Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan
Annual Workshop and General Meeting**

The feature presenter at this year's workshop is the award winning Saskatchewan author, Sharon Butala. Presentations will include habitat management impacts on wildlife, insect associations with plants, plant-animal interactions in the Lake Athabasca sand dunes; disturbance impacts on mammals and birds; the often overlooked aquatic plant-animal relationships and updates from the Prairie Conservation Action Plan and Saskatchewan's Biodiversity Action Plan.

Other highlights include a discussion session on the growth of the native seed industry and a winter twig identification workshop. For more information contact Andy Hammermeister, at (306) 668 - 3940 or email: info@npss.sk.ca.

February 20 - 21, 2001

**SASKATCHEWAN GRAZING
WORKSHOP - SASKATOON, SK.**

This practical workshop will focus on key factors and practices influencing the success and profitability of grazing management. Presentations will be made by producers, specialists and researchers from Saskatchewan and surrounding areas. For more information contact Marilyn Phillips, Grazing and Pasture Technology Program at (306) 757 - 9499.

February 22 - 25, 2001

**6th PRAIRIE CONSERVATION &
ENDANGERED SPECIES CONFERENCE
WINNIPEG, MB**

The conference provides a forum to discuss the latest issues, information, research and trends in the conservation of prairie landscape and species. It affords an excellent opportunity for divergent prairie interest groups to explore ideas and approaches to sustain landowners and users as well as the rich natural heritage that is the endowment of all prairie dwellers. Topics will include prairie habitat and land use, prairie population issues, global pressures on the prairies, and sharing common ground. For more information see the website <http://iisd.ca/wetlands/pcesc/default.htm>.

May 1 - 2, 2001

**NATIVE PLANT SUMMIT VI -
BRANDON, MB.**

The theme of this summit is "Stand Enhancement" and will comprise three talk sessions overviewing all the key aspects of native plant utilization. The sessions are 1) Installation 2) Management and 3) Enhancement. For more information contact Anh Phan at (204) 227 - 4435 or email Anh.Phan@dacks.ca.

Please note, for a current update on coming events, check our website at www.wetland.sk.ca

Share Your Ideas . . .

Anyone with story ideas or coming events is welcome to share them with us at:

Attention: Lesley Hall
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- Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development Fund in Saskatchewan (CARDS)
- Canada/Saskatchewan Green Plan Agreement

Canada Millennium Partnership Program
Canada Trust Friends of the Environment Foundation

Canadian Wildlife Service and World Wildlife Fund through:

- Endangered Species Recovery Fund
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Environment Canada through eco-Action 2000 and the Habitat Stewardship Program

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (U.S.)

Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management through:

- Fish and Wildlife Development Fund
- SaskPower Shand Greenhouse
- Saskatchewan Wetland Conservation Corporation
- Wildlife Habitat Canada